

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A hydrous gel comprising a gel comprising at least two polymers comprising acrylic acid/sodium acrylate copolymer and at least one of polyacrylic acid and sodium polyacrylate crosslinked with an aluminum compound, and water, and ~~an ascorbic acid or a derivative thereof~~ at least one ascorbic acid compound selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric ester, ascorbic acid-2-pyrophosphoric ester, ascorbic acid-2-triphosphoric ester, ascorbic acid-2-polyphosphoric acid, ascorbic acid-2,3-diphosphoric ester, ascorbic acid-2,6-diphosphoric ester, ascorbic acid-2-sulfuric ester, ascorbic acid-6-palmitic ester, ascorbic acid-2,6-palmitic ester, ascorbic acid-2-glucoside, ascorbic acid-2-O-glucoside-6-palmitic ester, ascorbic acid-5,6-benzylidene, ascorbic acid-5,6-propylidene and their metal salts, ammonium salts and alkyl- or hydroxyalkyl-substituted ammonium salts, wherein the pH when said hydrous gel is 100-fold diluted with purified water is from 6.5 to 8.5, wherein the aluminum compound is magnesium hydroxide-aluminum hydroxide co-precipitate.
2. (original): The hydrous gel as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pH is from 7.0 to 8.0.
3. (canceled).

4. (previously presented): The hydrous gel as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the aluminum compound content is from 0.01 to 10 parts by mass per 100 parts by mass of said hydrous gel.

5. (currently amended): The hydrous gel as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the content of the ascorbic acid ~~or the derivative thereof~~ compound is from 0.01 to 10 parts by mass per 100 parts by mass of said hydrous gel.

6. (currently amended): The hydrous gel as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the ascorbic acid ~~derivative~~ compound is ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric ester or a salt thereof.

7. (previously presented): The hydrous gel as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said hydrous gel comprises a polyhydric alcohol.

8. (canceled).

9. (withdrawn): A process for producing a hydrous gel, comprising preparing a mixture containing at least two polymers selected from the group consisting of polyacrylic acid, sodium polyacrylate and partially neutralized polyacrylate, an aluminum compound, water and an ascorbic acid or a derivative thereof, and heating said mixture at 25 to 65°C.

10. (withdrawn): The process for producing a hydrous gel as claimed in claim 9, wherein the pH when said hydrous gel is 100-fold diluted with purified water is adjusted to 6.5 to 8.5.

11. (withdrawn): The process for producing a hydrous gel as claimed in claim 10, wherein the pH is adjusted to 7.0 to 8.0.

12. (withdrawn): A cosmetic material comprising a hydrous gel claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8.

13. (withdrawn): A preparation for external application comprising a hydrous gel claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8.